

[ANON]

A N

EXPOSITION

O F

The Reasons of DISSENT

F R O M

A Resolution of the last GENERAL
ASSEMBLY,

To apply to PARLIAMENT for

An Augmentation of Stipends, &c.

Entered by FIFTEEN Ruling Elders,

THESS. V. 12. 13. *And we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you,----and to esteem them very highly in Love for their Work's sake; and be at Peace among yourselves.*

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed in the Year MDCCL.



A N
E X P O S I T I O N
O F

The Reasons of Dissent, &c.

THE Publisher owns, that it is not so much for the Honour of those that presented these Reasons of Dissent, as for the Benefit and Information of the Country in general, that he hath introduced them to the wide World; *that is*, to satisfy them that the Clergy intend to apply to Parliament for an *unnecessary, unreasonable, and an unjust* Thing, as the Reasons expressly say. Leaving the Honour of the Authors to take its Trial,

I, to satisfy them that it is a grandissim Mistake, have taken upon me to lay them open to publick View. If the Introducator hath done it without the Knowledge and Consent of the Dissenters; so have I, without the Knowledge and Consent of any Clergyman of the Church of *Scotland*. And here I enter a *Caueat* against imputing this, or any Part of it, to that Venerable Body of Men.

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If I have done well, not they, but I deserve Commendation; and if I have performed my Part ill, I alone am to be blamed. This *interim* Return to the Dissenters Reasons is only intended for present Use. No doubt the Committee of Assembly appointed to draw up Answers, will do it in due Time, and may dispose of them as they please; either keep them *in retentis*, or make them follow as far as the Reasons can go.

THERE hath gone forth a left-handed Report, that the Clergy are so lifted up with their late good Behaviour, that they flatter themselves the Government will deny them nothing. This their Opposers, with Tooth and Nail, stick to; notwithstanding it hath been publickly told, without Contradiction, and can be proved, that the Project was begun before the Troubles, or long before they were ended. Of this Insinuation the best Half is for the Honour of the Clergy, *that is*, that they behaved well; and the other Half, *that is*, their overvaluing themselves upon it, they deny. I suppose it is to cut down any Pretensions the Clergy may have for doing their Duty in troublesome Times, that we are told by the Introducer, "If the Clergy are *Whigs* from Principle, they have their Reward; --- if they are not, they deserve none." If this Gentleman hath not ready Money, he hath ready Wit enough to repay all the good Offices that have been, or shall be done him. --- If they were done from Principle,



Principle, they who did them have their Reward; and if not, they deserve none.

HERE I take the Liberty to give, in full Answer to all these sneaking Surmises, the Words of the Rev. Mr. *William Steil*, because I verily believe he speaks the Sense of all the Clergy of *Scotland*. — “I never thought, far less said, that we Ministers of the Gospel have, by past Services, deserved or merited the Royal Favour in this Matter, or the good Graces of the great Senators of the Nation. A just Regard for a free and legal Government, for sweet Liberty, for our own Property, and for our holy Religion, is a solid Foundation, a substantial Reason, for dutiful and loyal Behaviour towards King GEORGE, the Head of this great Community, or Body-politick.”

THE good Behaviour of the Clergy, or their Vanity and Pride on that Account, or their better Behaviour than that of many, very many, of their Opposers, (I may say it for them), is not their greatest Fault: It is their undutiful Behaviour to the landed Interest, whose Advice they had the ill Manners to refuse; and their stupid Obstinacy in preferring their own before the Interest of others; and their daring to apply to Parliament, without their Concurrence and Assistance.

THE *Theory* of good Manners is one thing, and the Practice of it another. The landed Interest and Ruling Elders, I presume, understand the Rules of polite Behaviour better

than the Clergy; but for the Practice of it, the Clergy have exceeded them in Speech and Print. And even this Introducer, after blaming the Clergy, but unjustly, for an Attempt upon one of the most illustrious Characters of this Country, for Witticisms of the lowest kind, and for publick Advertisements, as rude and unmannerly in themselves, he hath the good Breeding to accuse the Ministers of the GOSPEL with flattering and offending, and having already begun the Disturbance of the Peace and Quiet of his Majesty's Government. I believe the Publisher hath not experienced either Flattery or Offence from the Clergy; he can take Offence without their giving it: And for Flattery, I hope they are not, and never will be so weak, as to bestow it upon a Man that doth not seem to want it.

THE Fly on the Chariot-wheel imagined itself an important Being, by reason of the Dust that was raised about it; Almost as vainly do some fancy, that Pamphlets and Advertisements for and against the Clergy, do disturb the Peace and Quiet of his Majesty's happy Government: Whereas in Truth, all that hath hitherto happened betwixt the Clergy and their Adversaries, is no more in proportion to the Peace of the Government, than two Fish-wives, or two Herb-women, scolding in the Street, is to the Peace and Quiet of the Town of *Edinburgh*.

I do not well understand what this Publisher means, when he tells the Country, that *RIGHT* is a *strong Word*, and not easily digested. *Right*, however, is a right Word, and very easily understood; though few are willing to understand it, when it is not on their Side. *Beg* is a mean and low and weak Word, and not easily pronounced even by Beggars themselves; and the landed Interest will be the last that the Clergy will address with such pitiful Language. — I'll stop the Reader no longer with the Wit, Eloquence, and especially the shameless Assurance of this Introducutor; who would impose upon the Clergy such as would oppress them with Poverty and Contempt, for their best Friends; and those that would willingly relieve and raise them above both, for Men that love neither the Church nor the Clergy. He certainly mistakes his Men for Children.

BUT before I proceed to the Reasons in hand, I think it proper to advertise, that, notwithstanding the Subscriptions they have made their Appearance with, they are only to be considered as the Opinion and Arguments of fifteen Ruling Elders, in their highest Place; and as they are now printed, they are to be considered in their lower Rank of a Pamphlet. If one Brother-Elder gives as much Respect to another as he gets, he cannot be said to be unmannerly. And among Brethren-pamphleters there is no Ceremony. There is no making War Hat in Hand. And
there

there is no writing Controversy to purpose, but upon the *Par*. I shall meddle with no Man's Character, or with his Station in civil Life; whether high or low; for as such, they do not stand in my Way. I have scarce any Business with them, even as Office-bearers in the Church. I look upon them in no other Light than as my Brethren-pamphleters: And whether they or I have the better in the Debate, some will judge candidly, and many just as Pride, Party or Passion prevails.

THE Dissenters from the Resolution of the last General Assembly, or some of them, had agreed without a Division, that an Application should be made to Parliament, representing the distressed Condition of several Ministers in *Scotland*, by reason of the Lowness of their Stipends; and this they did for the Sake of *Peace* and *Unanimity*, but contrary to their *real Opinion*. These Ruling Elders take the Freedom to revoke this their peaceable and Christian Concession, and think themselves at Liberty to dissent from every Step that hath been made toward such an Application; ---- because the Assembly is resolved to demand an Alteration of the *Minimum*. So say they. Whereas

THE Truth is, the Assembly hath no DEMANDS to make upon the Parliament; nor have they laid their Commands upon their Commissioners even to *petition* for such an Alteration. They have only left it to them to act in that Matter as they shall see Cause.

And

And for fear they should see Cause, these Dissenters have turned away their Eyes from a *good View*, left the distressed Ministers without Relief, renounced their Regard for *Peace* and *Unanimity*, and have forcibly drawn to themselves a Dispensation to dissent from EVERY Step made in the last or preceeding Assemblies toward such an Application. In their Opinion the Assembly hath erred in one thing; and therefore they have done nothing right in the whole Matter. When the Assembly agreed to the Overture for an Application in general, had they at the same time submitted to every Limitation and Restriction these Dissenters might think fit to clog their Application with, they might have had some Pretext to retract their Concession: But as the Case stands, I do think, to say no worse, it is not an usual way of negotiating. However political Jockeying is allowed among Treaty-makers, and all the Adepts in that Art may act or speak either conform or contrary to their *real Opinions*, as they think fit; for my Part, as these fifteen have retracted all for the sake of one displeasing Thing, (and I may say the only Thing), they are at Liberty to retract all their Reasons for so doing; for which I here offer them all the Assistance in my Power.

In their *first Reason* they say, They are sensible that several Ministers of the Church of *Scotland* are intitled to a reasonable Augmentation of their Stipends, and that this
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may be done by Law as it now stands ; but then they add, *as the Extent and State of the Tithes in their respective Parishes can bear.* And for Fear they should not be understood, in their fifth Reason, they say, In some Parishes there are no free Tithes, and in other Parishes no Tithes at all. And in their sixth Reason they say, Every single Parish must still stand upon its own distinct footing ; and every respective Stipend must still be determined from an exact Knowledge of the Extent, Income, and Produce of the Parish. Now if Clergymen, worthy of their Commiseration, are Ministers of such Parishes, where no free Tithes or no Tithes are, they have no legal Relief at present ; and if they are relieved at all, it must be by Parliament.

In their *second Reason* they affirm, that such an Application is without Precedent. If by this they mean that no such Application hath hitherto been made to a *British* Parliament; it is a very grave and a great Truth. If in the Years 1617 or 1636, when the Stipends of the parochial Clergy were regulated, there was no Application made on their Part, the Clergy then must have been more modest, and more denied to the World than the present Clergy are ; and the Nobility and Gentry in those Days must have been more sensible of the Usefulness and Necessity of Religion, and more liberal to the Teachers of it, than is the present Generation. ----- The History of these and preceeding Times, shew that it
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was with the greatest Relucancy, that the landed Interest allowed the Clergy such Stipends, or any Stipends at all. And had the present Ministers to do with a Scots Parliament, they would not give themselves the needless Trouble to apply for an Augmentation, considering what Appearance our Nobility and Gentry make against it.

OF what follows a very ordinary Preacher could have made a distinct Head of Discourse; — Taxes and Poverty, and the Effects of civil and foreign Wars. — It is very true, that the necessary Defence of our own and the Liberties of *Europe*, made the Land-tax double to what it was for a Course of Years before. But then it is as true, that the Land-holders are the Masters and Proprietors of the whole Nation; and their Interest, as such, is the capital, or only Interest in the Kingdom, and to which all other Interests are subservient; and the Interest of *Religion* too, if *Religion* is a national Benefit. Whatever is lost to the Inhabitants is lost to the Land; and whatever they gain, though immediately for their own Advantage; yet still turns out for the Profit of their Landlordships. All Acquisitions made by Farmer, Fisher, Merchant, or Mechanick, like so much good Manure, enriches the Land, and raises its Value. Of all Ranks of People, landed Men ought most chearfully to contribute to the Expences of a necessary War, because it is securing their own Property. And I hope

many such rejoice that that Money, with the Blessing of GOD, hath delivered us from the Hands of our domestick and foreign Enemies. And whatever these fifteen Elders may do for themselves, I am persuaded they have no Authority from the rest of the landed Interest, either to grudge or grone for them. In their rough Declarations against Ministers applying to Parliament, they scorn to make use of such lamentable Language.

I condole with them, and I hope so doth the Clergy, the Effusion of *British* Blood occasioned by the last War. But when Money is in greater Plenty, and cheaper now than ever it was in *Scotland* before, I cannot see how we are nationally poorer. But upon Supposition that we are a poor People, that in no sort renders the present Condition of the landed Interest the more deplorable: For he that hath *L. 500* in Land in *Scotland*, is as rich as he that hath an equal Sum of the same Nature in *Middlesex*, and six neighbouring Counties. And if it could oblige these dissenting Elders, and make them forbear their Groans and Grumbings, their Cries and Lamentations, I am well able to shew the Difference betwixt a Land-tax in these Counties, and a Land-tax in this Country.

THEIR *third Reason* informs the Assembly of what they knew very well before, that, to protect the Clergy in the Infancy of the Reformation, from being oppressed with Poverty, a Court was established to judge, not upon

on what affected their own Interest, but to determine betwixt the Clergy and other Subjects. All which notwithstanding, there are some Clergymen oppressed with the Poorness and Meanness of their Stipends, from which that Court cannot relieve them; as hath been made appear in the Exposition of the first Reason. To say that this Court is *not to judge upon what affected their own Interest*, is a Piece of needless Nonsense, occasioned, as I think, by mistaking the Manuscript. For if a Judge becomes a Party in any Process, he leaves the Bench, and allows his Brethren to determine.

THE *fourth Reason* gravely informs the General Assembly and the Nation, that this Court is not tied down to eight Chalders of Victual, or eight hundred Merks, as the *Minimum*, but are impowered by Law to make a better Provision for Ministers; which, being translated into the Language of —, another Country, is as much as if they had said, *The least that they can give, is not the most that they can give*. The Lords of Council and Session are the nursing Fathers of the Church, and have been frequently, though unjustly, blamed for being too indulgent to their Children: For in few Cases have they given as much as the parochial Tithes amount to. — And if the landed Interest look upon it as a Hardship to be so unequally treated, it is in their Power to apply to Parliament to fix a *Maximum* as well as a *Minimum*.

In their *fifth Reason* it is said, That the Increase of the *Minimum* to *L. 1000 Scots* is unreasonable, and cannot in Justice be obtained. — This is the main Point in Debate betwixt the Clergy and their Opposers; which the Parliament only can determine. If one of the Elders, Subscribers to these Reasons, had remembered, that in full Assembly he allowed that *L. 1000 Scots*, or even *L. 100 Sterling*, was not an unreasonable Provision for a Minister, he might have opposed the Words *unreasonable* and *unjust*. But, as it happens, the Words cannot hurt the Cause of the Ministers, because nothing is added to support them. — It is said indeed, that many Parishes are in no sort able to bear this Proportion, since in some Parishes there are no free Tithes, and in others no Tithes at all. But neither of these Cases can affect the Reasonableness and Justice of the proposed Augmentation. The Insolvency of the Debitor cannot render the Creditors Demands unjust. The want of Sufficiency of Tithes in a Parish, is one of the Things complained of. And tho' the Commissioners of Teinds cannot grant them Relief, which I allow again, and as often as they please; yet that the Parliament can do no more than they, is what I will never yield.

It is further said, That tho' this *L. 1000 Scots* could be levied, the Reasoners are of Opinion, that it is an additional Burden much too heavy to be laid upon this poor Country;
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for they believe it will amount to about *L. 20,000 Sterling per annum*. If the proposed Augmentation should amount to that Sum, and if it is really wanting, it is but just that the Clergy should have it. No Man is better intitled to Tithes, than the Clergy are to a Maintenance out of them. It gives me some Trouble that I am once more obliged to take notice of their poorly pleading the Poverty of the Country, to shew the Unreasonableness of such an Augmentation. Are not the Land-rents increased, and the Value of Lands thereby raised? The Improvements made of late, witness it. In one Generation the Rents of some Parishes have risen one Third; and the Farmer, by his Skill and Diligence in Labouring, may be able to bear it. There are no Marks of Poverty, I am told, to be seen in the Houses of the Nobility and Gentry; and there is more of Vanity than of Meanness in their Apparel, Furniture and Equipage. They are generally wise enough not to live above their Revenues. And I should be sorry to see them live sordidly and penuriously. And these are they that ought to maintain the Ministers; having in their Hands Funds more than sufficient for the Purpose. For if the Committee of Assembly 1749 have reckoned right, the free Tithes in *Scotland*, unaffected with Ministers Stipends, amount to *L. 60,000 Sterling per annum*.

It is a Misrepresentation of the Case to say this poor Country cannot bear the proposed Augmentation.

Augmentation. None of the Clergy hath proposed a Tax upon rich and poor. They only expect that the landed Interest, who can and ought to support the Ministers, shall find themselves obliged to do it in a Way more liberal than hitherto; and by this the Country, poor as it is, will not be one Penny the poorer. What the Ministers get will not be squandered away upon foreign Vanities; and I am persuaded that not one Shilling of it will be sent abroad to the *Pretender*. And since what they obtain will be insured to the Nation, the Country, instead of being poorer, will be the richer for it. And if the Legislature find, that *L. 1000 Scots* is but a just and reasonable Maintenance for a Minister, the Tithes must furnish it, or they must want it, unless the King and Parliament provide for them another Way. --- There are indeed some Funds which the Clergy might beg of the Crown, were it not for some sturdy Beggars of another Rank, who have prevented them. When the Malt-tax was extended to *Scotland*, the Prime Minister, then so called, insisted upon *L. 20,000 Sterling*, because *Scotland* drew as much in superfluous Posts and Pensions. This I own is unequally distributed; but for an *Average*, or *taking the Thing in the complex*, (a Term used by the Reasoners), what the Country of *Scotland* gains by the Royal Bounty, and what the Ministers want, exactly balance one another.

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THEIR *sixth Reason* is a Mistake of the Question; and their taking it for granted, that every single Parish must stand upon its own distinct Footing, where, if it happens there are no free Tithes, nor any Tithes at all, the Parliament cannot grant the Minister of such a Parish any Relief. What Method the Parliament will take (or if they will take any Method at all) to relieve such Ministers, and to discover all the free Tithes in *Scotland*, as neither the Dissenters, nor the Members of last Assembly certainly know; to declare such a Discovery and such a Relief impracticable, is a Premature prescribing to their Superiors and Judges. They allow that the Parliament of *Scotland*, anno 1633, had before them the State of the whole Tithes of the Kingdom. And as to particular Parishes, the Commissioners of Teinds have it before them in every Process for Augmentation; and what hath been may be. And if the Parliament in their first ensuing Session, should order such a State to be laid before them in the next, the Clergy will gain one Step toward an Augmentation. The Committee of Assembly 1649 have already made a considerable Progress in the Discovery; and such another Committee with parliamentary Assistance, shall finish the whole Affair in half a Year.

THEIR *seventh* BECAUSE informs the Assembly, that there is a less Disparity betwixt the highest and lowest Livings in *Scotland*, than in any other Part of *Europe*. — Our young

young Gentlemen, when they travel, mind more other Things than those of the national Churches; or some of them had not been so positive in this their Assertion now in their riper Years. In *Holland* all the Ministers of the established Church have from the Publick just the same Allowance to a *Stiver*; what more they receive is paid them by the Magistrates of such Cities as call and employ them, according to the Dignity of the Place, and Expence of living in it.

HOWEVER, if, according to the Reasoners, there is in this Country the least Disparity betwixt the highest and lowest Church-living, there is no Occasion for them to make it less. They confidently affirm, that a Million of Merks is, at least in proportion, equal to the Provision of any other Protestant Clergy. These Gentlemen perhaps never were in *Sweden*, where the Clergy generally have as many Dollars as ours have Merks *Scots*. And if they have any Correspondents in *Ireland*, they can inform them, that the Church-livings there are in proportion quadruple to what they are here.

To free the distressed landed Interest of any additional Burden, they propose to do the Business of the Clergy, by *Annexations* and *new Erections*. If I should allow that 300 People is too small a Number for one Minister's pastoral Pains and Labour, (which every one will not grant); yet no Man that knows any thing of the Business of a Minister in *Scotland*, but must

must think a thousand People a very sufficient Charge; for to him they are as one Family, whom he must teach, admonish and exhort, comfort in Distress, and rebuke sometimes privately and sometimes publickly. It is commonly thought, there are a Million of Souls, and it is well known there are not a thousand Ministers, in this Country. It is true, that Children make a Part of the People in all political Arithmetick; but Infancy and Childhood add not much to the Minister's Ease; For when any of these are sick, the Minister is sent for; and it is esteemed a Part of his Duty to pray with the Family, and for the Child. --- And though it may be true, that there are some Parishes of less than an hundred People, (occasioned by imparking arable Lands, and turning away Ground-labourers) there are others of several thousands; And if two Miles can surround some, twenty Miles will not surround others. Try it when they will, they shall find more new Erections necessary, than Annexations practicable; and yet they fondly imagine, that when the Profit by Annexations, and the Loss by new Erections, are stated and balanced, they shall find a saving of Stipends sufficient to answer, in a great Measure, the proposed Augmentation; that is, to save themselves, they are willing the Clergy of *Scotland* should be reduced more than one Third. Happy it is that these fifteen could not with Decency find out a Scheme for annexing the Million of Merks *Scots* to the

poor groaning landed Interest. Things are not ripe enough for such an Alteration of Affairs. I know to my Grief, that there are some People who look upon the Teachers of *Religion* as the Bane of Society; and if they were able, they would with Pleasure pay as much to banish them the Kingdom, as their Maintenance costs the Country. However, that will take some more Time, and they and such as they, must be troubled a little longer with a Parcel of ----- Clergy.

WHEN one hath little to say to the Purpose, he will say any thing rather than be silent; and accordingly we are told in their *eighth* BECAUSE, That their Compassion is not restricted to the necessitous Clergy, but at the same time they have some Degree of Sympathy and Commiseration for the narrow Circumstances of other Ranks of Men; and that it is well known to the Clergy themselves, how many respectable Families reside in their several Parishes, who, not possessed of above *L. 1000 Scots per annum*, and loaded besides with Taxes, and oppressive Debts, are nevertheless obliged to support a Rank equal to the Ministers; ---- *So Taxes again.* Their Degree of Sympathy and Commiseration to their Brethren, is no more than *Be ye cloathed, and be ye fed.* For these oppressive Debts, whether contracted by themselves or Predecessors, must remain a Burden until discharged. The Clergy cannot, and their neighbouring Lairds are readier to take their Possessions, and give them

them in their Change, than to pay a Shilling for them. I think I may promise for the Clergy, that they take no Pleasure in the low and narrow Circumstances of Gentlemen, by Education or by Birth, and am apt to think, that these Gentlemen themselves never gave any of the fifteen Authority to procure for them the invidious Comfort of placing the Ministers of the GOSPEL in lower Circumstances than their own. A Minister that will faithfully discharge his Duty, if he had a Turn and Talents for other Affairs, he hath not Time to make use of them for his worldly Interest. Whereas these Gentlemen of small Fortunes may, by their Industry, make some Addition to them in any Employment, they are capable of, and suits best with their Inclinations. And if they do not think the Ministry of the GOSPEL below their Dignity, and will fit themselves for it, the Clergy, I believe, will make them welcome to take Part in it; and if all Businessess or Callings are below them, they may still preserve the Stock to their Widows and Children. But a Minister cannot leave his Stipend to his Family. — I might put this Argument in fewer Words, to display its full Force; “Some Gentle-
 “ men, by reason of oppressive Debts, and
 “ a Load of Taxes, are reduced to live upon
 “ L. 1000 Scots a-year; and therefore Mini-
 “ sters of the GOSPEL must not have so much.”
 To this BECAUSE I find another of a
 very different and surprising sort, tacked in
 these

these Words: "It ought also to be considered, that this Project, though aimed chiefly at the landed Interest, yet, by natural Consequence, cannot fail to affect proportionally Tenants, Farmers, and other inferior Classes of Men." — And why should they complain of this; since the more the Tenant, Farmer, &c. are affected, the less is left to the landed Interest as their Proportion of the proposed Augmentation. Suppose upon an Estate of *L. 5000 per annum*, possessed either by Lord or Laird, one had a Claim for *L. 1000*, or a fifth Part of the Value, and that this Claim should be determined in favour of the Pursuer, the Land remains; the Country is not a Shilling the poorer; the Tenant pays none of the Debt; and if his Farm is evicted, he may be as easy under his new Landlord as he was under the old. Though this *natural Consequence* may be plain enough to those that draw it, before it is so to me, they must draw a Straw before my Nose. For I cannot find, by all the Invention I am capable of, that a Series of superfine logical Consequences from one to a thousand, can make out, that he who hath no Concern in the Issue of a Process, cannot fail to be affected with it. But the weaker the Argument, the plainer their Design of terrifying the Farmers, and their Dependents, into the Assistance of the landed Interest; but how justly, God will judge.

THE Committee of Assembly 1749 is blamed in the *ninth Reason*, for the Neglect of a prudent

dent and expedient Instruction, viz. "To explain to the landed Interest, the Nature of this Project, and the Motives that gave Rise to it, to alleviate the Prejudices, and to remove the general Resentment." — All the Prudence of this Instruction notwithstanding, there was scarce a single Person of common Sense but did foresee, that such Conferences would produce nothing but Delay and Division among the Ministers themselves. Creditors are not in custom to consult debating Debtors about the Method of obtaining Payment. The *fifteen* have forgot that they heard in full Assembly, that, in compliance with this Instruction, an Attempt had been made in order to satisfy the landed Interest of the Reasonableness of their Proposal; but had received such discouraging and indecent Answers, as were not fit to be repeated in such a venerable Meeting. No Man then insisted upon a more express Account; and therefore the Dissenters have no Right now to charge that Committee with an Omission of their Duty to their Constituents. To be treated in publick Papers as dirty and avaritious Invaders of the Property of others, must justify their stopping all Addresseees to insulting Land-holders, in the Eyes of every one that doth not court Contempt and Affronts.

THEY are pleased to add, that many unguarded (and they hope false) Aspersions had raised a general Resentment. What these unguarded and false Aspersions are, they do not

not tell, and I do not know; and cannot therefore judge whether they justly gave Offence or not. But sure I am, in return the Clergy have borne many abusive Expressions from Lay Elders with Patience, I might say with Pity and Contempt. But how from any Expressions used in former Assemblies, (for which they have no Right to complain in the last Assembly), how from all this a Suspicion can be raised, or how the *fifteen* can report it, that it is the Design of the Clergy to put themselves in the Balance against the Weight of the whole Gentlemen of Property in *Scotland*; surpasses common Imagination. — These are Men of Wealth and Power. From among them are our Magistrates and Judges. 'Tis they that fill all Places of Honour and Profit. And they represent this Part of the Kingdom in Parliament. In Times of Election of parliamentary Members, the Clergy, as such, are only Spectators; and the only Body of Men that have nothing to say in that important Business, and as little to expect for their Vote and Interest. There is not a single Burgess in the smallest Royal Borough, but on these Occasions hath more Weight than all the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*. But all this their Inferiority notwithstanding, they can put their Cause, tho' not themselves, in the Balance against all the Law and Learning of their Opposers. It is their Happiness, and the Happiness of the whole Nation, (the landed Interest of *Scotland* not excepted), that it

it is not by the Greatness and Power of one Party, or by the Poverty and humble Condition of the other, that a *British* Parliament will determine.

So remarkable is their *senth* BECAUSE, that I cannot forbear transcribing it. "Be-
 " cause when we consider the Manner in
 " which this Scheme was originally set on
 " Foot, the Methods by which it hath been
 " carried on, and the Arguments employed in
 " support of it, we cannot but think, that
 " it hath been calculated, not so much for
 " the Relief of distressed Clergymen, as in
 " prosecution of other Views, which we do
 " not incline to enlarge upon." — Surely in
 their preceeding Reason, it is but a very need-
 less and unfair Complaint, which is made a-
 gainst the Committee of Assembly 1749, for
 not explaining to the landed Interest the Na-
 ture of the Project, and the Motives that gave
 Rise to it. And if I could believe the Truth
 of what they *cannot but think*, I must like-
 wise believe, that they knew more of the
 Matter than the Clergy do themselves, who
 are not yet let into the Secret, which their
 penetrating Imaginations have found out. —
 This Secret which they discovered, they do
 not incline to enlarge upon. If I had Autho-
 rity, I would defy them in the Name of the
 Clergy to mention any one finistrous and un-
 fair View that the Ministers of the GOSPEL
 ever had in the whole Matter. Had they but
 added, *We are sorry for it, or we hope it is not*
true,

true, it had been a sly Slander. But as they *cannot but think*, that the principal View in the intended Application to Parliament is disguised, is an Injury as blunt as groundless, for which the Members of the last Assembly, and those of the Church who are for an Application, have a Demand for legal Redress; though I think they may safely despise it, as a rude and very low Artifice: For if they themselves do, not one of a thousand besides will believe it.

HAD I said that the Ruling Elders, who voted for an Application, were wiser, and more prudent than those who voted against it, with all Justice, I might have been accused of very ill Manners. Comparisons, if in any Case, in such a Case are always odious. But I know not another way to balance their *eleventh Reason*, but to let it stand against their Assertion, *That many of the wisest and most prudent of the Clergy are against it.*

THEIR *twelfth and last Reason*, I might say the only Reason worth Notice, in so far is in these Words: "It is notorious, that almost
 " the whole landed Interest in *Scotland* have
 " in the strongest Terms declared their Dis-
 " approbation of this ill concerted Project,
 " which they consider in no other Light than
 " a direct Inroad upon their undoubt-
 " ed Property, set on Foot by a Body of
 " Men, who either already are, or by the
 " common Course of Law, may be abundantly
 " ly provided."— This is but the Opinion of
 others,

others, and the Dissenters should have made it their own, or not made use of it. For if others think unjustly, it is no Reason why they should be influenced by it. In one's own personal Case he may yield to the groundless Clamours of another: But as a Member of a Society he cannot, without betraying his Trust; yield or give up the Interest of the Society to the unjust Importunities of other Men. If they are not, say these rough Declarants, the Ministers may be sufficiently provided. Out of what Funds? The Tithes no doubt; and yet these are their undoubted Property. If the Land-holders really think, that all the Tithes, in their Possession, are theirs by undoubted Right, it is astonishing that they should calmly submit to daily Increachments made upon it by the Commission of Teinds for the Augmentation of Ministers Stipends. What a Man hath an undoubted Right to, cannot be taken from him, as the Law stands, were he the most opulent, and he who demands it the most indigent. He hath but an imperfect Right to a Supply of his Necessities; and this Right is left to the Determination of God and his own Conscience, God's deputed Judge in his Breast. — The King and Parliament of *Great Britain* are the best Guardians of Liberty and Property that the World ever knew. And, in return for the many good Advices given to the Clergy, I advise them to submit this their *undoubted Right* to the Parliament, and pray

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for

for Redress of a Course of Injuries done them by the Court of Council and Session, for the space of a hundred Years. And if they can make this Right appear, happy they! thus at once to be freed from all expensive and vexatious Law-suits, and their Property secured against all future Invasions. They and their Ministers may live in Peace; and if their Landlordships please, they may attend the publick Worship of God without Distraction, and hear the Word of Salvation preached without Pique, or personal Prejudice against the Preacher. --- It is my *real Opinion*, (and I have no mind to speak against it), that which ever way the Parliament shall decide the Debate betwixt the landed Interest and the Clergy, it will turn out at last to the Advantage of both Parties. It hath been publickly said, that our Judges are Men of like Passions with others; and though these Passions are all *busb*, when strict Justice is to be administred betwixt Man and Man, yet in Cases where a discretionary Latitude is allowed, they may sometimes be played off against the Heritor, and sometimes against the Minister. It is certain, the Lords of Council and Session, as a Commission of Teinds, have a parliamentary Power, and a kind of delegated Sovereignty in Matters concerning the Minister's Maintenance, and the Heritors of his Parish, with which some have pretended that strict Justice, is inconsistent. And since the best Way to preserve one's Rights and Privileges, is to make use of them, it is possible

possible (and more I will not say for any Man's Pleasure) a Man of a haughty Spirit may instigate a Minister or his Wife, to commence a Law-suit for an Augmentation of Stipend, though on other Occasions he may treat the Clergy with the utmost Contempt.

AND if the *fifteen* "sincerely think, that
 "no greater Misfortune can befall this Coun-
 "try, than an open Rupture and Contest be-
 "tween the Clergy and the Proprietors of
 "Land, who, from the justest Reason, both
 "of Religion and Policy, have hitherto re-
 "mained inseparably united;" I am sincere-
 ly of Opinion, that this *inseparable* Union
 can only be preserved, or rather restored, by
 a parliamentary Decision. By this their re-
 spective Rights will be better and more dis-
 tinctly settled than they are at present, and to
 the lasting Peace and Quiet of both Parties.---
 I do allow, that there is a Relation of a long
 standing betwixt the Clergy and the Proprie-
 tors of Lands, though not a very agreeable
 one, that of *Creditors* and bad *Debtors*; and is
 like to continue, unless redressed by Parlia-
 ment. I likewise acknowledge, that some
 Acts of Friendship have passed betwixt Heritors
 and their Ministers. But this *inseparable Uni-*
on notwithstanding, I never yet heard that a
 Parish augmented the poorest Stipend, with-
 out being compelled by Law. On the other
 hand, it is notoriously known, when such a
 Case happens, the Minister makes his Ac-
 count of all the Neglect, Discouragement, and

rude Treatment that the Heritors can with Safety bestow upon him. If strong and rude Terms used by the landed Interest, in their publick Declarations against an Application to Parliament, is any Proof of a peaceable and friendly Disposition towards the Ministers of the GOSPEL, let the World judge. How happy would both Parties be, did the Parliament at once cut off all Cause of Contention. This may be done ; and I hope will be done. Better fight one decisive Battle, than be harrassed with Skirmishes from Generation to Generation.

MINISTERS of the Gospel know it is their Duty, as far as possible, to *live peaceably with all Men* ; and that in the present Case it is their Interest so to do. They are by far the weaker Party : It is not therefore their Turn to commence the Quarrel. The stronger Party hath begun already ; and if they have a mind to persist, they must blame themselves, and not the Ministers, for all the dismal Consequences which they foresee.

IN their *first Reason* of Dissent it is said, Such an Application to Parliament may *prove highly dangerous to the Peace and Tranquillity of the Nation*. And, to end as they began, in this their concluding BECAUSE, we are told, that
 “ the Prospect of this unhappy Division can-
 “ not but excite in our Minds the most alarm-
 “ ing and melancholy Apprehensions, when
 “ we consider the Embarrassment and Distur-
 “ bance, which it may create to HIS MAJESTY
 “ STY’S

"STRY's quiet and happy Government; the
 "Jealousies and Discontent, which it may
 "raise in the Breasts of many of his faithful
 "Subjects; the manifest Obstruction it must
 "give to the Progress of Piety and Virtue;
 "and finally the unavoidable Advantage it
 "will afford to the secret and avowed Ene-
 "mies of our excellent Constitution and Go-
 "vernment, who are very ready to improve
 "to their own Benefit the Misfortunes and
 "Divisions of their Country, by practising
 "upon the weak, misleading the unguarded,
 "and inflaming the disaffected and discon-
 "tented." Well then, all these dreadful Con-
 sequences they foresee will happen upon a
 bare Application to Parliament, without con-
 sidering how such an Application will be re-
 ceived, or whether the Clergy succeed or suc-
 cumb in the Attempt. To petition for par-
 liamentary Redress of Grievances, whether
 real or imaginary, is the Right of Subjects of
 whatever Rank: And to raise such a frightful
 Alarm against an Application to be made by
 Ministers, who are distressed by the Lowness
 of their Stipends, and have no other Means of
 Relief, abstracting from their succeeding or
 miscarrying, is to treat the Clergy as the
 weakest of Mankind, by threatening and ter-
 rifying them out of the common Rights and
 Privileges of all dutiful and obedient Subjects:
 Or, if their Alarm hath any other Meaning,
 it can be nothing else but their own Fears
 that the Parliament will do the Clergy Ju-
 stice,

stice, by granting them a reasonable Maintenance out of the Tithes now in Possession of the landed Interest. This almost every neutral Person must conclude, from the Keennesse of the Opposition now carrying on through all the Shires and Counties of *Scotland*. The Clergy have their own Hopes, and their Adversaries Fears to support them: And all in such a Situation are almost sure of Victory.

HOWEVER, one may be allowed to inquire into the Nature of these Emergencies, which must produce these awful, mournful, and melancholy Consequences. The Clergy will either succeed in their Application or miscarry. If the last Case happens, it is to be presumed, that they will bear their Disappointment with that Patience that becomes their Character: And should they be deprived of what they now enjoy, as some County Declarants, and this Introductor strongly insinuate, they will rather live as Lawyers and Physicians do, by those that employ them, than give the Government any Disturbance. And I hope God will assist and enable them to live quiet, peaceable, and useful Subjects, even in the lowest and meanest Circumstances.

THE landed Interest, for their further Security, well know that it is not in the Power of the Clergy, had they the Inclinations, to embarrass and disturb HIS MAJESTY's happy and quiet Government. Their Lives are few, and their Fortunes too small to give Umbrage to such a powerful Body of Men, as is their Landlordships

Landlordships of *Scotland*, and far less to the Government of *Great Britain*. Whether disappointed or discontented, they must still remain a weak and harmless Set of Men. And if the Ministers are these many of HIS MAJESTY'S *faithful Subjects*, in whose Breasts their Misapplication to Parliament will raise Jealousies; these Jealousies may hurt and disquiet themselves, but cannot be troublesome to others. If they do succeed, they will be pleased, and their Opposers then will become the discontented Party. It is by them only, as being Men of high Minds, touchy Tempers, Wealth and Power, that any Disturbance can arise. The very Mention of those alarming and melancholly Apprehensions, is in them no less than threatening the Disquiet and Disturbance of the Nation. Perhaps they have not carried back their Thoughts to the Reign of King *Charles I.*; or if they have, they should have been more cautious in their Expressions. I believe they have no Thoughts at present to give the Nation any Disturbance; but (to use a Saying of King *James*) *The Devil that put it in their Head, may put it in their Heart too.* For my own Part, instead of considering their Fears and dismal Apprehensions, as a Piece of consummate Prudence and Policy, I look upon it as one of those insignificant Things which Speech-makers let fall or drop from them. — At any Rate, such Language doth not affect the supplicant Ministers, but their Judges to whom they apply for Redress

dress of Grievances, and who are as much above the Resentment of a few angry Lords and Lairds, as they are above the Resentment of the Ministers.

THESE Reasoners, who love to deal in the *marvellous*, are pleased to add, that an Augmentation of Ministers Stipends to *L. 1000 Scots*, or *L. 83 : 6 : 8 Sterling*, must give a manifest Obstruction to the Progress of Piety and Virtue. --- The Wisdom of the King and Parliament, *anno 1617*, have stated the Case, that *the want of sufficient Maintenance and Provisions for Ministers, kept the Ministry in Poverty and Contempt, and disabled them to travel fruitfully in their Charges.* --- Till these Dissenters give better Reasons than their own Assertion, or something like a Reason, I shall be of the parliamentary Opinion. King *James VI.* was a sort of a *Solomon*; and he says, That Poverty and Contempt obstruct the Progress of Piety and Virtue; but a greater *SOLOMON* than he says, *The poor Man's Wisdom is despised, and his Words are not heard.* Matters of Fact are obstinate Proofs. There are many Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, who have in Stipends above *L. 1000*, and some of them have good Estates of their own; and notwithstanding the Incumbrance of four or five hundred Pounds *Sterling per annum*, they discharge their Duty as well (I do not like to say better) as he that is provided with 800 Merks; a sufficient Fund indeed for *Temperance and Humility*! It is not therefore the Augmentation, but the Way

Way of obtaining it, which must put a manifest Obstruction to the Progress of Piety and Virtue.

THIS is explained by the *Mid-Lothian* Declarants in the *Courant* of June 14.; when they say this Stop to Piety and Virtue must proceed from *souring the Minds of the People, and alienating their Affections from the Pastors of the established Church.* — Their Committee, in the *Courant* of June 18th, promise to carry on their Opposition with all the Decency that “ becomes the most sincere Friends and hearty Wellwishers to the established Church of Scotland, who from the Bottom of their Hearts regret the Occasion of their seeming to be set in Opposition to so respectable a Body of Men as the Clergy.” Sure such sweet Words ought not to proceed from sour Minds. *The Voice is the Voice of Jacob.* — It hath been oftener than once publicly noticed, that it is the landed Interest only, and not the People, or the *Populace*, that are to pay the Augmentation. And I shall only add, that it is a low, mean, and unfair Artifice, to alarm the Ministers with the Desertion of their People. The Ministers design them no Injury, nor is it in their Power to do them any. The Farmers hear, and can read *Jam. ii. 5.* *Hearken my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this World, rich in Faith and Heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? — Do not rich Men oppress you? — Do they not blaspheme that wor-*

thy Name by which ye are called? — I have no Authority to complain of their Oppression in *Temporals*. But of their *spiritual* Oppression by Presentations, Complaints resound not only in Church-judicatures, but through the whole Country. And will they, for the sake of their dearly beloved Landlordships, abandon the publick Worship of God, and, out of Revenge for a supposed Incroachment made upon the Property of landed Men, turn impious and immoral? These Dissenters should have considered, that it was said, (and not in a Corner), that the Ministers are the Sons of Farmers and Mechanicks; and he that said it, must speak with more Eloquence than he did at that Time, before he can persuade the People to abandon their own Blood.

THIS manifest Obstruction to the Progress of Piety and Morality (for *Virtue* properly signifies *Fortitude*) must begin at the landed Interest, the discontented and injured Party. And it is possible that in some of them this Stop hath already taken place. It is not an Observation of mine; but I have heard that this *twelfth Reason* of Dissent hath the Air of a Declaration of War against God and the GOVERNMENT.

THOUGH a Minister of the GOSPEL would not be allowed the Freedom to speak his Mind of the Disaffected, yet these *fifteen* take it upon them to affirm, that there are *secret* and avowed Enemies of our excellent Constitution and Government, and that these are
ready

ready to improve to their own *Benefit* the Misfortunes and Divisions of their Country. For this, I think, there is a ready Remedy; and let me advise the well affected landed Interest not to admit suspected Persons into their Party. I wish this Prescription may not have come too late. I am afraid that both well affected and ill affected, Friends and Enemies to our excellent Constitution, have already joined in the Opposition against the Augmentation of Ministers Stipends. If this Scheme divides the Ministers and the well affected landed Interest, that Division is balanced by a new Union. *Herod and Pontius Pilate* were made Friends. We know the Occasion. — I beg Pardon to dissent a little more from these *fifteen* Dissenters, notwithstanding their superior Knowledge of national Affairs. The disaffected Enemies of our excellent Government never did, and I hope never will improve the Misfortunes and Divisions of their Country to their own *Benefit*, whatever Improvements they have made to their own Ruin. The dismal Consequences of their undutiful Doings are too fresh in their Memories to allow a new Attempt. There is not any avowed Enemy of the Government, but is well known to the Clergy: For it is not full five Years since the well affected and disaffected spoke their Minds very freely. There is not in this Country two Sets of Men more opposite to one another, than the established Clergy and the *Jacobites*. The Clergy run no Risk of

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being deceived by those they never deal with, or of being betrayed by those they do not trust. It is the Business of the landed Interest to take care that those secret and avowed Enemies of the Government do not practise upon the weak, mislead the unguarded, and inflame the discontented. And there are weak, unguarded, and discontented landed Men, as well as Clergy.

THE fundamental Dispute betwixt the landed Interest and the Clergy, is about a Money-matter. The Clergy, at least some of them, want, and the Heritors are unwilling to give them any more. The Clergy are of Opinion, that the Parliament can and will enlarge their Allowance, and ascertain a Way of recovering that Allowance, shorter and less expensive than the present Method, by the common Course of the standing Law. That many of the Ministers do want a sufficient Maintenance is allowed; and that many more will want, is certain, if Improvement of Lands, Trade, and Increase of Money go on as they have done since the Year 1633. While the Mines of *Mexico* and *Peru* last, Part of them will continue to reach our Country. At that Time the Debtor paid 10 *per cent.* for borrowed Money, and now it can be had for 4. For one Generation more Ministers of the GOSPEL may be found; but in process of Time a Gentleman's Footman will scarce accept of the Charge.

It is possible some may have had that Period and Event in View, who had the Assurance to assert, that the Knowledge of the dead Languages, the Use of Scholiasts and Commentators, were the unnecessary Qualifications of a Minister of the GOSPEL. --- But if Learning ever becomes useless in the publick Teachers of Religion, they must either be inspired, as were the Apostles, or they must become *Butts* for *Prigs* and *young Barristers* to play their Wit upon. At present they stand their Ground: For, to their Honour be it said, in last Assembly, they had the Superiority in Eloquence, Argument, and good Manners, of all that opposed them. May they long continue burning and shining Lights, adorning their noble and sacred Profession, and Ornaments to the Church and Country! Such Clergy deserve Encouragement; and he is no Judge of Merit that refuses it.

LEARNING at present is more necessary than it was at the Reformation. The Ministers of the GOSPEL had then to do with Papists, and among themselves with Church-government; of which last I have not heard a Word in publick for these twenty Years past. Popery is what they still endeavour to guard their People against: And no Wonder, for the Church of *Rome* is an indefatigable and dreadful Adversary. But now they have to do with *Atheists* and *Infidels* besides. And to be ready to make out the Truth of natural Religion, and the Christian Revelation, and
to

to answer the Objections of Adversaries, is an additional Task, and in itself harder, than to defend the Doctrines of the national Church against all the Christians that differ from them.

I have now done with a Rubbish of Reasons, heaped together for the Defence of the Pockets of landed Men, and for no other Purpose whatever. And here how many wonderful Things, the Peace of the Kingdom, the Prosperity and Success of the Gospel, the Progress of Piety and Morality, and the Security of the Church, as by Law established, are brought in to support the worldly Interest of the landed Men? Much more would it be for the Honour of the landed Interest to speak plain and short; and say, for all Reasons and Arguments, that the Clergy have enough, and they will give them no more. And to correct the Introducer's *Encomium*, I should think it would become the Truth much better, if instead of, "they will see that the Opposition flowed not from Humour and Pique, but from Reason and Judgment, --- not from Disaffection to the Protestant Cause, but from a most hearty Concern for its Welfare, ----- not from Disregard to the Church of Scotland, but from a sincere Desire of seeing her flourish;" I say it had been more becoming the Truth, to have said, *but to serve their Pockets, but to keep their Money, and but to preserve their Possessions at any Rate.*

My Reasons for becoming a Volunteer in the Service of the Church of *Scotland*, are, that I am fully persuaded of the Being and Providence of God, the Creator and great Governor of the World; and that this Belief is absolutely necessary for the Support and Comfort of Particulars in all Cases and Conditions, and for the Peace and Happiness of every human Society; and that no Plan hath hitherto been proposed, (and some Attempts have been made), that can answer these Ends without Religion. — And because nothing but *Truth* can be necessary to be believed, I am convinced, that Religion is the *Truth*; and because it is the Truth, not only the temporal, but also the eternal Happiness, of the human Race depends upon the Knowledge and Belief of God's Government of the World, the Duties which we as rational Creatures owe to him, and to one another for his sake, and a State of Rewards and Punishments when this Life is ended. I am likewise well satisfied, that the Worship of God, especially publick Worship, is the best Preservative of Religion. It is also my firm Belief and Persuasion, that of all the Systems of Religion, and all the Editions of it, whether human or divine, the Christian Revelation is the most excellent; and hath been published and proclaimed with sufficient Evidence of its divine Authority. And that to know that God *was in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, is a greater, a more noble, and more useful Discovery than all that human

human Understanding ever did, or can find out.

It is therefore my sincere Opinion, that a Set of Men who have been set apart, and who have dedicated themselves to direct and to preside in the publick Worship of God, and to teach natural and revealed Religion; to explain the Doctrines of our holy Faith, and to enforce the Duties of our Christian Calling; and who labour in the Discharge of their Duty with Diligence, Ability, and an unblameable Reputation, are the most useful, and (whatever others may think) the most honourable Members of Society, and deserve a much greater Regard than what is paid them in this Country: For which Cause I heartily wish them Success in their intended Application to Parliament, and am resolved to contribute all in my Power towards it.

THOUGH I cannot say, that my Advice will be acceptable and useful to the Opposers of the Clergy, yet, for the sake of my Subject, I do desire them to have a due Regard to Matters of Fact, which cannot admit of Additions, Deductions, or Alterations. Here, to do the Dissenters Justice, I cannot accuse them of any wilful Misrepresentations of this kind; but for their Adherents, the County-declarants, they are not too scrupulously attached to the Truth. One of them says, it is by far the *smaller Part* of the Clergy that are for an Application to Parliament, another *several*, and a third *some* of the Clergy: Whereas

Whereas it is the Resolution and Act of the General Assembly. And the Act of no Court whatever is to be weakened with such unfair *Innuendoes*. This I think but a poor Fetch at any Rate; for I believe it is lawful for any Presbytery in *Scotland* to petition the Parliament in their own Name, and in the Name of all that shall adhere. The Publisher of these Reasons of Dissent seems to be an Artist at imposing upon the People. He says, *Entered by the Officers of State, &c.* Now had they been all Officers of State, they did not enter their Reasons of Dissent as such, but as Members of the General Assembly. I hope to hear no more of such sly Doings. They had best forbear them for their own Reputation: If not, they shall hear again.

2dly, I advise the landed Interest not to groan or grumble at Taxes. They own they are necessary, and why not rejoice, that, with the Blessing of God, they have been successfully laid out for the Defence of the Nation. Such Language by no means becomes Noblemen and Gentlemen and Judges of the Nation; and least of all Officers of State, who ought to be Guardians not only of the Interest, but likewise of the Honour of the Government. Smugglers, that Vermin of the Nation, plead the Weight of Taxes for their publick Theft and Rapine; and shall Patriots, the Friends and Servants of our excellent Constitution, make use of such a mean Defence against an Augmentation of the Ministers Stipends? The

Clergy pay all Taxes except the Land-tax. And I can promise for them, that they will accept of the Value of their Stipends in Lands, with all the Burdens and Privileges which belong to them.

3dly, I advise the noble, the honourable, the gentle, the great, the powerful landed Interest, to keep their Rank and Station, and to keep it closely and continually. Sometimes they are *Gentlemen Proprietors of Land*, sometimes the *poor Country*, and when it is for their Purpose, they are the *People* too. The Change of Terms is against the Laws of Logick; and when it is done with a View to impose and deceive to the Disadvantage of any one, it is contrary to the Laws of Morality. To sign an Information in a Law Process, all is reckoned fair that can serve a Clients Cause. But in signing Reasons of Dissent from an Act of the highest Church-judicature, Truth and Conscience should be their Guide, as they regard their God of Truth, and their holy Religion. And if they want good Reasons to satisfy themselves, they should not make use of bad ones to deceive and impose upon others.

4thly, and finally, I advise all the Gentlemen, and others in the Opposition, and all the Laity of *Scotland*, to treat the Clergy with more Respect, and much more Respect, than is at present in use; for the Reason of it is *sacred*. It is not what a Man possesses, either in Land or Money, but the Office that he bears, and the

the Part that he acts in the Community that intitles him to Honour and Esteem. The three learned Professions, that is, Religion, Medicine, and Law, have their Rank assigned every where in *Christendom*; of which three the religiously learned are the first. I am well informed, that in all Protestant Countries (I have nothing to do with the Popish) the Clergy are in high Esteem: And that in *Holland* particularly, the Ministers of the established Church take place of every one, except of a *Burgo-master* in his own City, where he is considered not as a Citizen, but as a Sovereign. And though one would think, that this is a childish Vanity, and unbecoming the Teachers of Christianity, yet it is of great Use in procuring them Access to the Great, and reverend Attention from high and low, in all Places and Companies, as well as in the Pulpits. Their Salaries or Stipends I hear are but small; but this Honour and civil Respect that is paid them maintains them in Dignity, procures them wealthy and creditable Marriages, and gives them a wonderful Influence over the People, and strikes such an Awe upon the rudest Rakes, that none of them dare misbehave in their Presence. If our Nobility and Gentry would take the Hint, and procure the Clergy a higher Rank than what they hold or claim, (and this would cost them no Money), they would do the Interest of Religion a singular Service. And if they refuse it, (which I fancy they will do as earnestly

neftly as they do their Money), the Affem-
bly's Commissioners may apply for it, at leaft
to procure a Law, that no landed Gentleman
in Scotland fhall in time coming prefume to
treat his Parifh-Minifter as a Piece of his E-
quipage, his Servant, or his Hireling; or to
ufe thefe or like Words, *He is my Minifter,*
and I pay him.



F I N I S